ment have announced schemes for grant of financial support to take up research and development, technology upgradation and the setting up of pilot plant production facilities. In addition, Government is providing soft loan assistance to industries for the expansion of existing units and the setting up of new units for production of silicon for use in solar cells. The Ministry has taken up a technology development plan for indigenous production of wind energy equipment and to encourage complete indigenisation of wind electric generators.

National Renewal Fund

6479. SHRI SAMIK LAHIRI : Will the Minister of INDUSTRY be pleased to state :

(a) whether the Union Government have considering to sanction Rs. 10 crore from National Renewal Fund to New Central Jute Mill, Budge Budge, West Bengal as prescribed in the package by BIFR; and

(b) if so, the details thereof ?

THE MINISTER OF INDUSTRY (SHRI MURASOLI MARAN) : (a) and (b) No, Sir. Assistance from National Renewal Fund is presently restricted only to Voluntary Retirement Scheme in Central Public Sector Undertakings and to the schemes for counselling, retraining and redeployment assistance to rationalised workers.

Supply of Yarn to Weavers of Assam

6480. SHRI DWARAKA NATH DAS : Will the Minister of TEXTILES be pleased to state :

(a) whether the Government are aware that weavers in Assam are suffering a lot due to non availability of yarn in time; and

(b) if so, the steps taken by the Government to provide yarn to weavers of the State ?

THE MINISTER OF TEXTILES (SHRI R.L. JALAPPA) : (a) and (b) Though no such reports have been received from Government of Assam, the Government is implementing Mill Gate Price Scheme through National Handloom Development Corporation with the objective to make available quality yarn, at reasonable price to handloom weavers in the country, including the weavers of Assam.

Purchase of Coir Items

6481. SHRI T. GOVINDAN : Will the Minister of INDUSTRY be pleased to state :

(a) whether the Government is considering the request of Government of Kerala to direct all the departments to buy coir products and furnishing items from the Coir Board/Coir Co-operative societies and other small-scale coir industries in Kerala to save the traditional Coir Manufacturers;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) if not, the reasons therefor and other steps being taken to save the coir industry of Kerala ?

THE MINISTER OF INDUSTRY (SHRI MURASOLI MARAN) : (a) and (b) In order to encourage the use of coir and coir products manufactured by small scale manufacturers and cooperative societies, the Government vide its letter dated March 13th, 1996 have requested all the State Governments, Union Territories, Central Government departments, public sector undertakings to instruct the concerned offices/organisations/institutions under their administrative control to make their purchase of coir and coir products from the Coir Board's showrooms and sales depots without inviting tenders/quotations.

(c) Does not arise.

Use of AZO Dyes

6482. PROF. RASA SINGH RAWAT : Will the Minister of TEXTILES be pleased to state :

(a) whether the Government of Germany had imposed ban on the printing of cotton clothes in AZO dyes in January, 1996;

(b) if so, whether the textile printing industry of Rajasthan has suffered a jolt as a result of the said ban;

(c) if so, the details thereof;

(d) whether the Government of Rajasthan had requested for setting up an Eco-laboratory Research and Development Centre for the textile industry; and

(e) if so, the action taken so far in this regard ?

THE MINISTER OF TEXTILES (SHRI R.L. JALAPPA) : (a) Yes Sir. Germany has banned production and import of textiles dyed and printed with specific AZO dyes which release any of the twenty harmful amines. This ban has already come into force with effect from 1st April, 1996.

(b) to (e) The textile trade, industry and exporters all over the country including Rajasthan are affected by the ban imposed by Germany. However, a proposal was received from Government of Rajasthan for setting up a Research and Development Centre for testing of textiles printed with azo dyes. The Government has taken necessary steps to upgrade the laboratory of Textiles Committee at Jaipur in Rajasthan for providing various eco-testing equipments required by the textile industry in Rajasthan.